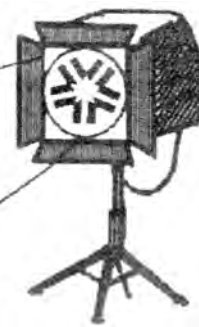




DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA OFFICE ON AGING

# Spotlight On Aging



VOLUME XXVI, ISSUE 1

A newsletter for D.C. Seniors

January 2015



## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

*By John M. Thompson, Ph.D., CPM, FAAMA*

In this issue of "Spotlight on Aging," we focus on volunteerism.

According to the United Nations, "volunteerism is a powerful means of engaging people in tackling development challenges worldwide." Such development challenges include inadequate or health and human services infrastructures in less developed countries and communities.

In our communities here in Washington, D.C., there are numerous opportunities to shape development in ways that could improve the quality of life of fellow residents.

One opportunity that I would like to present to you is the D.C. Office on Aging's (DCOA) Ambassador Program. The purpose of the Ambassador Program is to educate citizens about all of the programs and services offered by the DCOA, and those offered by other agencies, that could help seniors, persons with disabilities, and family caregivers improve their quality of life. By acquiring this knowledge, ambassadors are fully prepared to refer people who could benefit from the array of services to the appropriate agency.

Another program that may be of interest to you is our Intergenerational Program, which is a partnership between D.C. Public Schools (DCPS), Jump Start and DCOA. Through this partnership, Jump Start trains senior volunteers interested in working with children in the Pre-K programs in selected DCPS schools.

According to research, there are mutual benefits for both the seniors and the children when connected through intergenerational programs. For seniors, it is an opportunity to combat social isolation as they are working in the school system. Moreover, it gives the seniors an opportunity to give back by con-

tributing to a greater good of helping children, while being a huge help to the teachers.

For the children in intergenerational programs, studies show that they improve their social and academic skills, which means better success as they matriculate through the school system and interact with their peers. This is a win-win situation!

There are also volunteer opportunities available through the many senior villages in the District. Senior villages add tremendous value to the District as they are designed to help seniors with aging within their communities.

As these seniors remain in their communities, senior villages provide them with assistance in accessing a variety of discounted or free resources. These resources include, but are not limited to, handyman services to fix a hot water heater, furnace or light fixture; lawn service; transportation; companionship services; cooking; and light duty house cleaning. The services are discounted or free as a result of the generosity of community stakeholders willing to give of their time and resources.

As the number of seniors continues to grow, the demand for a number of these services will continue to rise in the District of Columbia. Consequently, there are plenty of opportunities for citizens to volunteer their time in a meaningful way.

I trust that as you make your New Year's resolutions that you would seriously consider an opportunity to join me in serving our fellow citizens. If interested, please contact us at 202-724-5622 to learn more about our volunteer programs. I am confident that once you get connected through volunteerism, you will see how you are making a tremendous impact in our communities.

## Intergenerational Volunteers



**Congratulations! DCOA Intergenerational Volunteer participants earn a certificate for completing their pre-service training with Jumpstart. They will be working with students in the classrooms at Langdon and Noyes Education Campuses.**

## At the White House



**Congress Heights Senior Wellness Seniors visited the White House for the holidays. Several of the members pictured are more than 80 years old and are visiting for the first time.**

## Help the Homeless and Animals Stay Warm

Hypothermia season has begun, so please look out for the homeless. When the actual or forecasted temperature or wind chill is 32°F or below, the District issues a Hypothermia Alert. When the temperature is 15°F or 20°F with precipitation, the District activates the Cold Emergency.

To request support for DC residents who are homeless and on the street

now, contact the Shelter Hotline at uposh@upo.org, 202-399-7093, 211, or 1-800-535-7252 (for toll-free calls from a pay phone).

Pets should be brought indoors during Hypothermia and Cold Emergency alerts. To report cruelty, neglect and animal emergencies 24 hours a day, call the Washington Humane Society at 202-723-5730.



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

MURIEL BOWSER, MAYOR



# January is Glaucoma Awareness Month

Glaucoma is a very misunderstood disease. Often, people don't realize the severity or who is affected.

## Four key facts about glaucoma

### 1. Glaucoma is a leading cause of blindness

Glaucoma can cause blindness if it is left untreated. And, unfortunately, approximately 10 percent of people with glaucoma who receive proper treatment still experience loss of vision.

### 2. There is no cure (yet) for glaucoma

Glaucoma is not curable, and once

vision is lost, it cannot be regained. With medication and/or surgery, it is possible to halt further loss of vision.

Since open-angle glaucoma is a chronic condition, it must be monitored for life. Diagnosis is the first step to preserving your vision.

### 3. Everyone is at risk for glaucoma

Everyone is at risk for glaucoma, from babies to senior citizens. Older people are at a higher risk for glaucoma, but babies can be born with glaucoma (approximately 1 out of every 10,000 babies born in the United

States). Young adults can get glaucoma, too. African Americans in particular are susceptible at a younger age.

### 4. There may be no symptoms to warn you

With open-angle glaucoma, the most common form, there are virtually no symptoms. Usually, no pain is associated with increased eye pressure.

Vision loss begins with peripheral or side vision. You may compensate for this unconsciously by turning your head to the side and may not notice anything until significant vision is lost.

The best way to protect your sight from glaucoma is to get tested. If you have glaucoma, treatment can begin immediately.

Please make sure you have your eyes checked regularly. For more information, consult your primary care physician.

## Mayor Gray Releases Age-Friendly DC Strategic Plan

At his final bi-weekly press briefing in December, Mayor Gray released the Age-Friendly DC Strategic Plan. The plan's release marks a significant step on the District's journey to become an age-friendly city under the terms of the World Health Organization's (WHO) Age-Friendly Environments initiative.

In October 2012, Mayor Gray announced that the District would seek the WHO designation as an Age-Friendly City, which indicates that the District is livable and accessible for aging residents, that the services the District delivers take the needs of aging residents into account, and that service-delivery agencies and staff demonstrate an understanding of, and sensitivity to, the needs of older residents.

The Mayor's designation set in motion a five-year process where the Age-Friendly team spent the better part of two years listening to residents and organizing key stakeholders to develop recommendations for this strategic

See **AGE-FRIENDLY D.C.**, page 26

## Be Smart About Safety. Be prepared for your future.



Smart911 is a free 9-1-1 service available in your community.

### No one plans to call 9-1-1, but now you can plan ahead.

Age-Friendly DC is focused on making DC a better and easier place in which to grow up and older, especially in those unexpected tough moments. One important way to become better prepared for difficult times is to register with Smart911. Sign up for Smart911 by recording key information — about yourself, family members, your home, pets and even vehicles — that will be immediately available to 9-1-1 when you make an emergency call. These details can save valuable time during an emergency. Just like signing up for other benefits, Smart911 is about being prepared.

### Seconds count when...

- > A child goes missing.
- > There's a fire.
- > You experience a medical emergency.
- > You have an accident in a vehicle, at home, or on the job.

**Seconds Save Lives. Sign Up Today.**

**Age-Friendly**  
\*\*\*  
**DC**

**Sign Up For Free**

 **Smart911.com™**

agefriendly@dc.gov | agefriendly.dc.gov | @AgeFriendlyDC

Smart911 is private and secure and provided free to residents by your local 9-1-1 and public safety agencies.

Find us on



## Spotlight On Aging

**continues on page 25,  
following the  
Housing & Home  
Care Options  
magazine at the right**

**Please pull out and keep  
the magazine.**

**You may also pull out and  
keep Spotlight on Aging.**



## Spotlight On Aging, continued

Continued from page 24, preceding the *Housing & Home Care Options* magazine at the left. Please pull out and keep the magazine. You may also pull out and keep Spotlight on Aging.

# Scenes from the 2014 Mayor's Senior Holiday Party



Commissioner on Aging Chairperson Romaine Thomas greets the attendees and introduces the members of the commission. Pictured from left to right are Commissioners Janet Heiss, Brenda Williams, Carolyn Nicholas, Grace Lewis, Samuel McCoy, Nathaniel Wilson, Connie Woody, Don Colodny and Brenda Atkinson Willoughby. Not pictured, but also present, was Vice Chairperson Ron Swanda.



Seniors from the Asian and Pacific Islander Senior Service Center sang a holiday song and played instruments during their performance. Here they are shown pictured with MC for the event Robert "Captain Fly" Frye and his WYCB co-host for the Senior Zone Shawn Perry.



Pharrell's "Happy" was also performed during the event by members of the DC Seniors Cameo Club.



Seniors in motorized scooters were also on the dance floor enjoying the event.



At-Large Councilmember Anita Bonds stopped by to greet seniors. She is pictured with Camile Williams, Chief of Staff, General Counsel Deborah Royster, and Executive Director John M. Thompson, PhD., CPM, FAAMA.



Volunteers from the Jr ROTC, Armed Forces, PEPCO, Verizon and the Office on Aging Senior Service Network were on hand to greet the seniors, unload the buses that arrived from across the city, serve the meals and bring holiday cheer.



Mayor Vincent C. Gray shared holiday greetings and spoke of the release of the Age Friendly DC report. Here he is pictured with Dr. Thompson and members of the DC Seniors Cameo Club.



# Community Calendar

## January Events

### 5th+ • 10:45 to 11:45 a.m. or noon to 1 p.m.

Start the new year out right with a strength, balance and posture class with Iona. The eight-week class meets every Monday and costs \$80, or \$13 per class on a drop-in basis. Other Iona fitness classes start the week of Jan. 5 as well. To register, see <http://www.iona.org/documents-library/forms/107-winter-2015-fitness-class-schedule/file.html> or call Darryl Simpson at 202-895-0238. Iona is located at 4125 Albemarle St. NW

### 7th • 9 a.m.

Seabury Resources for Aging will hold a Ward 5 advisory meeting at 2900 Newton St. NE. For more information, contact Thelma Hines at 202-529-8701.

### 7th • 7 to 8:45 p.m.

The North Michigan Park Civic Association will meet at the North Michigan Park Recreation Center,

1333 Emerson St. NE. Call Grace Lewis at 202-526-7696 for details.

### 8th • 10 a.m. to noon

Join the Ward 4 Mini Commission on Aging at its monthly meeting held at the Fourth District Police Precinct, 6001 Georgia Ave., NW. For more information, contact Alice Thompson at 202-535-1321.

### 10th • 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and 11th • 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Get healthy ideas from dozens of exhibitors at the NBC 4 Health and Fitness Expo at the Washington Convention Center, 801 Mt. Vernon Place, NW. The District of Columbia Office on Aging will be participating. For more information, see <http://bit.ly/nbc4healthandfitness>.

### 15th • 11:30 a.m.

The Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired will hold a town hall meeting at 2900 Newton St. NE. For more information, contact Thelma Hines at 202-529-8701.

### 21st • 10:30 a.m.

There will be a Ward 5 mini commission on aging meeting at 2900 Newton St. NE. For more information, contact Thelma Hines at 202-529-8701.

### 21st • noon to 2 p.m.

Current and prospective members are welcome to attend the Southwest Waterfront AARP Chapter #4751 luncheon meeting. The first part of the program will be the annual business meeting. Part two is "The State of Aging in Washington, D.C.," with speaker John M. Thompson, PhD, FAAMA, executive director of the D.C. Office on Aging. The lunch, which costs \$5, will be held in River Park Mutual Home's Community Room, 1311 Delaware Ave. SW. For further information, call chapter president Betty Jean Tolbert Jones at 202-554-0901, or email her at [bettyjeantolbertjones@yahoo.com](mailto:bettyjeantolbertjones@yahoo.com).

## Start the New Year off Right

Visit one of the citywide senior wellness centers to begin living a healthier lifestyle. For your convenience, they are now open on Saturdays and some evenings. The wellness centers are FREE for District residents age 60 and older. Call or stop by for more details.

### Bernice Fonteneau Senior Wellness Center

3531 Georgia Ave. NW  
202-727-0338

### Congress Heights Senior Wellness Center

3500 Martin Luther King, Jr Ave. SE  
202-563-7225

### Hattie Holmes Senior Wellness Center

324 Kennedy St. NW  
202-291-6170

### Hayes Senior Wellness Center

500 K St. NE  
202-727-0357

### Model Cities Senior Wellness Center

1901 Evarts St. NE  
202-635-1900

### Washington Seniors Wellness Center

3001 Alabama Ave. SE  
202-581-9355

## SPOTLIGHT ON AGING

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Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination which is prohibited by the Act. In addition, harassment based on any of the above protected categories is prohibited by the Act. Discrimination in violation of the Act will not be tolerated. Violators will be subjected to disciplinary action.

**The Office on Aging is in partnership with the District of Columbia Recycling Program.**

## Age friendly D.C.

*From page 25*

plan. The release of the plan signifies a shift into the implementation phase of this process.

"The District needs to be a welcoming place for all of our residents, regardless of their

age," Mayor Gray said. "This strategic plan will assist all aspects of the District government and our partners in ensuring that our older residents can age here with dignity and maximum livability."

For more information, visit [www.agefriendly.dc.gov](http://www.agefriendly.dc.gov).

## DC Office on Aging Employment Opportunity

The Department of Human Resources has posted the position of Statistician, Requisition Number JO-1412-786, for the D.C. Office on Aging. The incumbent initiates and implements plans to strengthen data collection, data analysis and data reporting activities of DCOA.

Incumbent's primary responsibilities for DCOA reporting include:

- Ensures completeness, accuracy and timeliness.
- Develops approaches and prepares analytical reports using SAS and/or SPSS on performance measures, core indicators and program benchmarks.
- Conducts program evaluation for various components of the DCOA, clients' satisfaction surveys, and provides professional development assessments, social and small media activities and council hearings, including preparing data collection instruments, keying, analyzing and reporting on evaluation data.
- Prepares comprehensive annual DCOA data analysis report of program results and disseminates results in a wide range of venues including publications, dashboards, summaries and special reports for DCOA, its stakeholders, government liaisons and sister agencies and members of the public.

For complete details or to apply, visit [www.dchr.dc.gov](http://www.dchr.dc.gov).